

FRESHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Freshford Parish Council 11 March 2024, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall

Parish Councillors Present: John Adler (Chairman), Elli Bate, Julian Carpenter, Jennifer Clamp, Jessie Forbes, John Putt

Apologies: None

In attendance: Selina Jobson (Parish Clerk)

Members of the Public: None

150. **Declarations of Interests and Requests for Dispensations**

None.

151. **Minutes of Meeting**

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2024 as a true record.

152. **Matters Arising**

None.

153. **Open Forum**

None.

154. **Co-option of Councillors**

No applications had been received for co-option and three councillor vacancies remained. Flyers were being sent out with the Freshford Newsletter, delivered to every house in the parish.

155. **Freshford Village Memorial Hall Car Park**

Councillors considered a request for a contribution towards recent drainage works in the Memorial Hall car park. The Freshford Village Memorial Hall (FVMH) Committee had asked that costs were split three ways between the Memorial Hall, the Galleries and the Parish Council; costs had been split in this way on previous occasions, although no formal agreement was in place. Further works to unblock the drain had been necessary and further invoices were awaited.

The Parish Council had not been consulted ahead of the works. The Parish Council contributed approximately £1800/year to the FVMH Committee for general maintenance under a formal agreement.

It was agreed that the FVMH Committee would be written to, stating that if, in future, the Parish Council is asked to contribute towards car park works, the Parish Council must be consulted ahead of works being undertaken. Each request will be considered, but it should not be assumed that the Parish Council will contribute towards repairs.

With three parish council vacancies there was no longer a councillor who was able to attend FVMH Committee meetings at the current time.

Resolved: to contribute £80, a third of the £240 costs, towards the drainage invoice.

156. **Planning Applications**

24/00584/LBA & 24/00583/FUL Forsters House, Church Hill, BA2 7TX: Internal and external alterations for the installation of openable flat roof window, repairs to roof including raising parapet walls, changing flat roof covering & addition of new hopper.

The Design and Access statement described the proposed works to assist with access to the roof for maintenance purposes only.

Resolved: No comment.

157. **Tree Applications**

24/00611/TCA Orchard House, Station Road, BA2 7WQ: Almond tree, 11m – fell

Resolved: No comment, but the Parish Council requested that the applicant made good on their statement to replant a number of native trees.

158. **Planning**

158.1 Neighbourhood Plan Review

The Chairs and Clerks of Freshford and Limpley Stoke parish councils had met to discuss a potential review of the joint Neighbourhood Plan. Limpley Stoke Parish Council remained interested in developing a separate plan. They were employing a consultant to review the current plan alongside the Wiltshire Council Local Plan and would share the outcomes of this review.

The Chair and Clerk were meeting B&NES Planning Officers to discuss the process of reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan and would report back to the next meeting.

158.2 Local Plan Options Consultation

B&NES was running a Local Plan Options consultation until 8 April 2024. Cllr Adler had attended a webinar about the consultation. B&NES had confirmed that they would consult parishes that had been identified for dwellings and held Neighbourhood Plans.

Freshford had been identified in the draft Local Plan as a more sustainable community, with an allocation of 15 dwellings to be built in the period of the plan (2022-2042).

The potential impact of this proposal for additional dwellings on the Neighbourhood Plan would be raised at the meeting with B&NES Planning Officers.

159. **Highways and Transport**

159.1 'Playing Out' event, 22 March 2024

A community meeting about the 'Playing Out' event had been held, providing residents with an opportunity to ask questions and raise any concerns.

159.2 Other Highways updates

Potholes had been reported via the B&NES Report It function and were being addressed by B&NES. The road at the bottom Staples Hill that had been damaged by flooding was due to be repaired and re-opened this week.

Work to review the state of the Freshford Mill bridge at the bottom of Rosemary Lane had been delayed by further flooding, but was due to take place shortly.

160. **Natural Environment**

160.1 Dark Skies Policy

Councillors considered a Dark Skies policy. Having such a policy would help to achieve appropriate lighting for a rural setting. It would be used to highlight and minimise unnecessary light pollution when considering planning applications, highways matters and street lighting.

Resolved: to approve the Dark Skies policy, subject to some minor amendments.

160.2 Quotes for the Removal of Temporary Plastic Matting on The Tynning

Three quotes had been sought. One quote had been received, one contractor was unable to complete the work this year and a third quote was still awaited. There was a need to engage a contractor promptly as the grass re-seeding needed to be carried out within the next couple of months.

Resolved: to approve the quote from Matt Snelgrove to remove the temporary plastic matting and reseed the paths.

160.3 Updates

A quote for securing the gate part of the kissing gate in the Cemetery would be sought.

B&NES had undertaken surfacing works on public footpath BA12/12, from The Tynning to Rosemary Lane; this path was now much improved. The B&NES' Rights of Way Officer had reported damage to the path in the field bordering Rosemary Lane at the bottom of the hill and that B&NES would evaluate options for addressing this situation.

B&NES had circulated Town & Parish Nature Action Plan Guidance.

The Village Steward contract with Matt Snelgrove would re-start on 3 April. Suggestions of works to be undertaken were requested. It was agreed that the contract would be paid as before, via Standing Order of £400/month in nine monthly payments.

161. Annual Parish Meeting, 8 May 2024

Councillors considered ways of running the Annual Parish Meeting. It was suggested that the meeting should focus on a positive and proactive vision of Freshford, and ideas for the event, including a possible external facilitator, would be explored.

ClIrs

162. Communications

The Spring edition of the Newsletter had been printed and volunteers were delivering a copy to Freshford households. ClIrs Forbes and Putt were thanked for their work on this.

163. Street Lighting

An update from Enerveo was awaited, as to whether the upgrading of 11 street lamps with LED lights would be undertaken by the end of March 2024 as previously indicated.

Two streetlights had been reported as on all day and a third light was switching on/off at incorrect times. Contractors would look at these when on site to install LED lights.

164. Energy Project

BWCE were awaiting on the outcome of their grant application, hopefully with a couple of weeks. The landowner remained positive about the project.

165. Finance

165.1 Unity Trust Bank account

A transfer of £38,000 had been made into the Instant Access account to earn interest. Around £9000 remained in the Current Account.

165.2 **Resolved:** to approve the following payments -

- £525.05 Selina Jobson for administration
- £543.75 Parish Magazines for the Spring Newsletter

165.3 **Resolved:** to approve the bank reconciliation, noting the following payments and receipt –

- £217.01 SSE electricity supply (Direct Debit)
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- £36.00 CPRE annual membership (Direct Debit)

166. External Meetings

The next Parish Liaison Meeting had been rescheduled to 6.30pm on 20 March in Keynsham. ClIrr Carpenter volunteered to attend.

ALCA were holding a meeting of Parish Council chairs on 16 April 2024.

167. Exchange of Information

The Police Community Support Officer had contacted the Clerk about liaison with Freshford Parish Council and had provided a crime report for Freshford.

A resident had reported concerns about an increasing number of rats in Freshford; it was thought that flooded rivers had displaced rats.

168. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 8 April, 7pm, Freshford Village Memorial Hall.

Meeting ended 9.20pm.